

MINUTES

MANSFIELD INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY

Special Meeting

Monday, March 19, 2007

Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

Members present: R. Favretti (Chairman), B. Gardner , J. Goodwin, R. Hall, K. Holt, P. Kochenburger,
B. Ryan, G. Zimmer
Members absent: P. Plante
Alternates present: L. Lombard, B. Pociask
Staff present: G. Meitzler, (Wetlands Agent), G. Padick (Director of Planning)

Chairman Favretti called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING:

W1370-Girard College Develop. Fund, Ellise Road, 1 lot subdivision with driveway crossing wetlands

Chairman Favretti disqualified himself, and Vice Chairperson Goodwin opened the Public Hearing. Goodwin appointed Alternate Lombard to act in Plante's absence and Alternate Pociask to act for Favretti. Members present and acting were Gardner, Goodwin, Hall, Holt, Kochenburger, Ryan, Zimmer, and alternates Lombard and Pociask. Wetlands Agent Meitzler read the Legal Notice as it appeared in the Willimantic Chronicle on 3-6 and 3-14-07, and also noted a 3-15-07 memo from G. Meitzler, a 2-27-07 memo from Windham Water Works, and a 3-19-07 letter from Mr. & Mrs. Stec with additional neighborhood signatures.

At this time Goodwin explained the Public Hearing process and welcomed the applicant's representatives: Joseph Capossela, Attorney for the applicant; Steve Filip, Surveyor; and Lorraine Hicks, Paralegal from Capossela's office.

Attorney Capossela submitted the certified return receipts from abutting property owners, and he gave a brief summary of the background on the proposal. He noted that the 3 prior applications were either denied or withdrawn, but related that the current application represents the most feasible and prudent way to cross the wetlands with the least amount of disturbance.

Surveyor Steve Filip reviewed with the Commission the proposed plans, describing in detail sheet 1 of 4 of the submitted plans. He indicated that he chose to cross the narrowest segment of wetlands with a driveway/bridge.

Capossela handed out a detail of the bridge, which span is proposed to be 24 feet long and the driveway width will be 16 feet across on the inside and 18 feet for the outside dimension. (Capossela indicated that his hand-out was a schematic drawing that showed a 15 foot inside width, but the drawing was inaccurate and the 16 feet shown on Filip's plan is correct.)

Filip explained the dimensions shown on sheet 3 of 4 of the submitted plans and indicated that the house and septic are outside of the 150 foot regulated area, but that a major portion (950 feet) of the driveway is within the regulated area. Filip indicated that there will be limited filling of wetlands at the bridge crossing and that most of the work being done is outside of wetlands, but within the regulated area. A temporary crossing of stones (with pipes laid to allow stream flow) will be built for construction equipment to use in order to construct the easterly abutment footing. Filip chose a location immediately downstream of the bridge for the temporary crossing, but a portion of the brook's embankment will need to be cut to reduce the slope for the temporary crossing (indicated on sheet 4). He also said that trees will need to be cut for both the bridge and the temporary crossing, and that the loggers will use the temporary crossing for this work.

Commissioner Hall asked Capossela about the applicant's intent for use of the property, and he was told that the site will be sold with the proceeds going to the Girard College Development Fund.

Holt inquired about the bridge's guard rail material. Steve Filip indicated that there will be 2 foot high concrete walls on each side of the bridge. She also asked about the proposed conservation easement area, and if it couldn't be extended to include the wetlands and brook south of the bridge, as well as other flood plain areas.

Ryan asked about the nearest neighbor's septic system and if the proposed activity is too close. The applicant assured Ryan that the work will not affect the neighbor's septic as long as the septic is at least 10 feet away.

Capossela indicated that the applicant would be willing to use plastic sheeting for extra protection from erosion if the proposed temporary crossing plan (pipes laid amidst stones) is utilized. Filip also agreed to revise the downstream erosion and sedimentation controls as per the Wetland Agent's memo of 3/15/07.

Zimmer asked if the applicant would consider renting a logger's bridge for use as a temporary crossing instead of the stones, as was recommended in the Wetlands Agent's memo. Capossela couldn't answer for the applicant, but suggested that the applicant would likely find a way to use a logger's bridge if the Agency imposed its use as a condition.

Capossela also said that he has reviewed the Wetland Agent's comments and suggestions and agrees to all.

Pociask asked what percent of the filling for the abutments would be in the wetland area. Filip indicated that the east side is all in wetlands and the west side filling will be outside the wetlands but within the regulated area.

There were concerns expressed that the bridge design may not be acceptable, as test borings have not been done to determine if the proposed bridge can be supported by the proposed footings at the proposed location.

Capossela agreed to get more information regarding the requests and concerns of the Commissioners.

At this time Goodwin opened the floor for Public Comment.

- Burt Handfield of 276 Codfish Falls Road read a statement against the proposal, suggesting that the land should go to Joshua's Trust.
- Beverly Stec of 48 Ellise Road questioned the bridge width.
- Richard Stec of 48 Ellise Road commented that the 16 foot width is too large, and indicated that he wants assurance that the land cannot be further subdivided.

Goodwin asked the applicant to address guard rails, footing issues, and the temporary crossing/logger's bridge issue.

Richard Stec asked that the applicant also address the Right-of-Way off Ellise Road that appears to allow additional access to the subject property. Capossela responded that this Right-of-Way is not likely to be used.

Hall MOVED, Kochenburger seconded, to continue the Public Hearing until the April 4th meeting. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine K. Holt, Secretary